

DRAWINGS

Applicant has further submitted replacement drawings that more specifically depict the claimed method, as argued below, and disclosed in the original specification and the amended claims.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

OBVIOUSNESS

Examiner submits that claims 1-12, and 14-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sykes, Jr. (US Patent Application Publication 2002/0129108), in view of Gabber et al. Applicant respectfully traverses.

Applicant notes that claims 1-13, and claims 15-44, and claims 46-49 are pending this are pending this application, and claims 14 and 45 have been canceled.

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U.S.C. § 103 ANALYSIS

CLAIM 1 IN VIEW OF SYKES AND GABBER

In the Final Office Action, Examiner states¹: that in reference to claim 1, Sykes discloses a method and system for archiving, registering, and verifying electronic communications transmitted between clients and recipients via a network (i.e. internet), (abstract and paragraph [0004], lines 1-13). Specifically, Examiner states that Sykes discloses the third party archiving and verification system to comprise: ²

- The method for registering and certifying an electronic message, the system and method further comprising a client, an intended recipient, a website (i.e. third party archiving and verification website, Figures 4-22), a processing unit (i.e. third party archiving and verification server), an email database, a means (i.e. third party archiving and verification provider) to register the electronic message, the system and method, (abstract; paragraph [0004], lines 1-13; and paragraph [0038], line 1 to paragraph [0040], line 17), comprising the steps of:

¹ Application/Control Number 09/982,145, Final Office Action, pp 4-5.

² Application/Control Number 09/982,145, Final Office Action, pp 4-5.

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- The client accessing the website and establishing a registration account; the processing unit assigning a code (i.e. account ID) to the registration account of the client, (paragraph [0048], line 1 to paragraph [0049], line 16 and Figure 4); and
- The processing unit receiving the electronic message, the electronic message being from the client; the processing unit storing information about the electronic message and the registration account in the email database; the **processing unit resending the electronic message to the intended recipient as identified by the client in the registration account**; the processing unit tracking the date the electronic message was sent by the processing unit; the processing unit tracking the date the electronic message was received by the intended recipient; the processing unit creating a confirmation record (i.e. message table entry) that comprises the date the electronic message was sent and the date the electronic message was received by the intended recipient; the processing unit sending the client a copy of the confirmation record (Figure 26); and the processing unit storing information about the confirmation record and the registration account in the email database, (paragraph [0038], line 1 to [0047], line 12; paragraph

[0059], line 1 to paragraph [0061], line 8; and paragraph [0065], lines 9-13).

Applicant argues that the above cited method Examiner states is disclosed in Sykes is not analogous to the method disclosed in the instant application, as amended in this second response to the Final Office Action. In fact, Applicant notes that the references to Sykes, as cited above, by the Examiner read precisely as follow in the Sykes specification:

- A method and system for archiving and/or verifying electronic communications. The method and system provide verification of an email sent by a sender to a recipient, comprising receiving a copy of an email as an addressee; indexing the email according to at least one of sender, recipient, date, or subject matter; **and storing an exact copy of the email as received**. The method and system also provide for secure electronic communication between a sender and at least one recipient, comprising receiving from the sender view a secure internet connection a message and the email address of at least one intended recipient of the message; **sending an email message to the at least one intended recipient of the message that a message is waiting**; transmitting the message to the at least one intended recipient via a secure internet connection established by the at least one intended recipient; **and sending an email message to the sender that the at least one recipient has**

been sent the message. The method and system also provide for transmitting a facsimile for a sender to a recipient, the comprising: receiving an electronic facsimile message from the sender together with the facsimile number of the recipient; storing a copy of the electronic facsimile message; transmitting the facsimile message to the facsimile number of the recipient. ³

- This invention relates to archiving and/or verifying electronic communications. According to a first aspect of the invention relating to sending verifiable email messages, the invention comprises addressing the email to a third party verification provider, either as an addressee or as a cc, who will index the message according to at least one of sender, date, recipient, and subject, and store an exact copy of the e-mail message. Similarly, the invention also relates to providing **email verification** of an email sent by a sender to a recipient, **comprising receiving a copy of an email as an addressee; indexing the email according to at least one of**

³ Sykes abstract, US publication number 2002/0129108, as cited by Examiner in the Final Office Action, page 4, paragraph 3.

sender, recipient, date, or subject matter; and storing an exact copy of the email as received.⁴

- According to a first aspect, this invention relates to a **system and a method for senders to backup and archive email to a third party server without the need for conventional backup software, thereby providing proof of on-line communications.**

The system and method are preferably implemented by a third party archiving and verification provider using an Application Service Provider ("ASP") model that allows a sender to use the system and method regardless of his or her location on the Internet. An example of the structure of tables in a SQL database for implementing the system and method of this invention is shown in Appendix A, attached hereto, and incorporated herein by reference. In the preferred embodiment, no special software is required, and an email sender can use the system without changing his standard email process.

Referring to FIG. 1, at 22 the sender sends an email to the recipient, and to the third party archiving and verification provider either as an addressee (via the "To:" field) or as a copy (via the

⁴ Sykes specification, paragraph 004, US publication number 2002/0129108, as cited by Examiner in the Final Office Action, page 4, paragraph 3.

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"CC:" field). Using any conventional email program, such as Outlook, Lotus Notes, Eudora, etc., the sender prepares an email to a recipient, and in the "To" field, or in the "CC:" field also addresses the email to the sender's account with the third party archiving and verification provider. For example an email sender would address the email, or copy the email, to his or her system account xxxxx@yyyyy.com, where xxxxx is a string identifying the sender's account with the third party archiving and verification provider, and where yyyyy.com is the third-party verification provider's email address.

At 24, the email message is received by the third party archiving and verification provider. At 26, a Message Transfer Agent (MTA), for example Sendmail, available from Sendmail, Emoryville, Calif., passes the email to a filter that generates an id based upon the time and date of receipt. The MTA is running on the system server. The email's id is preferably a 24 character identification code in the format yyyyymmddhhmmssnnnnnnnnnn where yyyyymmdd is an eight-character representation of the date of receipt, hhmmss is a six-character representation of the time of receipt, and nnnnnnnnnn is a unique ten-digit integer. At 28, the email message is written out to a queue directory based upon the id assigned to the email. At 30, a record is inserted into a queue table in the system's database,

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which cues a cataloging daemon to begin processing the message.

At 32 the MTA returns to processing incoming mail requests.⁵

- The third party verification provider's system includes at least one, and preferably more than one, cataloging daemons that monitor the queue table in the system database. The cataloging daemons also run on the system server. The number of cataloging daemons depends upon the CPU and the IO. Each cataloging daemon is assigned an id that corresponds to the queue table and the queue directories. The queue table has 2 fields: a queue number and a queue message ID. The queue directory is structured as:

/gp/gpc1/outgoing, /gp/gpc1/incoming, /gp/gpc0/outgoing, and /gp/gpc0/incoming, and depending on the number of queues desired, the gpc(number) directory would be correspondingly increased. The same applies for an outgoing queue; a single process is in charge of it as well. When a cataloging daemon encounters an entry in its queue, it begins processing.

At 34, the header of the email message is read, based on RFC-822 internet mail standards, (which standards are incorporated

⁵ Sykes specification, US publication number 2002/0129108, paragraph 38, line 1, to paragraph 40, line 17, as cited by Examiner in the Final Office Action, page 5, paragraph 1.

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herein by references as if fully set forth). At 36, each email address in the "To:" and "CC:" lines of the email message's header are temporarily stored in an array, which may be a simple character pointer array. The "From:" line of the email message's header is temporarily stored separately. At 38, the cataloging daemon performs a lookup in an alias table of each email address to determine if that email address is a system account with the third party archiving and verification provider. If an email address is an account on the system, the cataloging daemon extracts the system's id for that account. At 40, if the address is valid, the email message's "Received:" header is verified with the MTA table. The MTA table is an extra security feature that stores and allows comparison with the mail relay authorized to deliver the email message to the account. This is an optional feature, that is preferably turned off by default for most accounts. The MTA table has 2 fields, user ID and the sender's MTA's host name. This ensures that the email message was sent from the proper internet mail relay, i.e. an email address that, according to the user's account profile, is authorized to send email to the account. At 42, if the internet mail relay is correct or if it is non-existent the cataloging daemon checks the email message's "From:" header against the address table to verify that the address is allowed to send to the system account. "Non-existent" means that no record is found in

the MTA table for that user. This means that the user did not wish to restrict email coming in based on their outgoing mail server. If the user does have an entry and that entry does not match the value in the MTA table, the message is rejected and an error email is placed in the queue for delivery to the user who sent the email. At 44, if the operations at 38, 40 and 42 are successful, the email message is passed to a catalogue routine, which is part of the cataloging daemon. If there is an error, appropriate error routines are called.

At 46, the email message's "To:", "From:", and "Subject:" lines and the message's size are stored in the system's message table, with the email message referred to by its assigned message id. The message table has the following fields: a) message id; b) user id; c) folder id (for later use in grouping messages); d) "To:" line; e) "From:" line; f) "Subject:" line; g) "Date:" line; h) "Time:" line; i) "Size:" line; j) expiration date; and k) has the message been paid for.

At 48, the archive matrix is used to determine the price of the email. The matrix, an example of which is shown in FIG. 3, is a cross of storage duration and message size. After the price of the email is determined, the price is inserted into the system's transaction table

together with the email message's system id. The storage duration is determined based upon the default value in the sender's account profile with the third party archiving and verification provider, unless the sender selects a different duration. At 50, a notification is written for each recipient in the email message to an outgoing message queue directory. The notification preferably includes the system message id, the date that the message was archived, and the original contents of the message including all attachments. A sample message is shown in FIG. 26. At 52 the cataloging daemon checks its particular queue and begins processing the next email message.

The email message remains stored with the third party archiving and verification provider for a time determined by the sender's user profile, which was established at the time the sender opened its account, as from time to time amended.

Alternatively, the user could be allowed to select the time for storage at the time the message is sent. The user can also extend the time for storage later, as described below. **The third party verification provider preferably provides the sender with access to the stored email messages via a web browser, allowing the sender to manage the stored messages, deleting unneeded messages, extending the storage time for**

messages, and requesting verified copies of messages.⁶ The system and method of the present invention provide a secure method for Internet users to communicate registered emails on the Internet without using conventional email clients such as Microsoft's Outlook Express or Netscape's Network Navigator. Instead, messages are created and read inside a web browser such as Microsoft's Internet Explorer, or Netscape's Navigator. Further, unlike conventional email, the system and method of this invention allow the sender to know if and when a message has been read. **The system and method allow the sender to see the state of any message, i.e., the user can see that the message has been delivered and read by the recipient, in contrast to conventional email where a user sends a message and is only notified when and if the recipient replies.** According to an alternate aspect of the invention, the system and method also allows the sender to receive an electronic or telephone reply to a needed request.

On the FIG. 7 "Main Menu--Welcome" page, the user would click "gProof Confidential" link, and reach the FIG. 20 page. From the

⁶ Sykes specification, US publication number 2002/0129108, paragraph 41, line 1, to paragraph 47, line 12, as cited by Examiner in the Final Office Action, page 5, paragraph 1.

FIG. 20 page, the user the "Outbox" button to reach the FIG. 21 screen. On the FIG. 21 screen, the user is presented with an attachment box, an upload, and next buttons. As the user uploads files, they appear in the attachment box. These messages are stored on the system server as MIME entities. This preserves the content-type and other properties needed. The file names are defined as "internalMessageID.count++". After the user clicks the next button, the user is prompted with the "to", "from", "subject", and "body" form. The user is prompted with a confirmation of how much the message will cost and a "Send it" button.

As shown in FIG. 23, at 100, the Sender securely uploads email message to Third Party Archiving and Verification Provider. At 102, Third Party Archiving and Verification Provider emails Recipient that an message is waiting. At 104, Recipient securely downloads message from Third Party Archiving and Verification Provider. At 106, Third Party Archiving and Verification Provider emails Sender when Recipient receives message.⁷

⁷ Sykes specification, US publication number 2002/0129108, paragraph 59, line 1, to paragraph 61, line 8, as cited by Examiner in the Final Office Action, page 5, paragraph 1.

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- The user is able to check the status of the message and view the selection. A time and date stamp can be applied to show when the message was received, and when the selection was made.⁸

**ANALYSIS OF SYKES SPECIFICATION, AS REFERENCED AND CITED BY
THE EXAMINER IN THE FINAL OFFICE ACTION**

Applicant respectfully submits that the above cited portions of the Sykes specification do not disclose the method of claim 1, as disclosed in the instant application. Specifically, an analysis of the references to Sykes, as cited by the Examiner, fail to disclose the following novelties of the instant application.

**1. THE METHOD OF DELIVERY OF THE EMAIL BY THE INDEPENDENT
THIRD PARTY TO THE INTENDED RECIPIENT IN THE INSTANT
APPLICATION IS NOT DISCLOSED BY SYKES**

Examiner states in her First and Final Office Action⁹ that Sykes discloses:
the system and method, (abstract; paragraph [0004], lines 1-13; and

⁸ Sykes specification, US publication number 2002/0129108, paragraph 65, line 9 to line 13, as cited by Examiner in the Final Office Action, page 5, paragraph 1.

⁹ Application/Control Number 09/982,145, Final Office Action, pp 4-5.

paragraph [0038], line 1 to paragraph [0040], line 17), comprising the steps of:

- The client accessing the website and establishing a registration account; the processing unit assigning a code (i.e. account ID) to the registration account of the client, (paragraph [0048], line 1 to paragraph [0049], line 16 and Figure 4); and
- The processing unit receiving the electronic message, the electronic message being from the client; the processing unit storing information about the electronic message and the registration account in the email database; the **processing unit resending the electronic message to the intended recipient as identified by the client in the registration account**; the processing unit tracking the date the electronic message was sent by the processing unit; the processing unit tracking the date the electronic message was received by the intended recipient; the processing unit creating a confirmation record (i.e. message table entry) that comprises the date the electronic message was sent and the date the electronic message was received by the intended recipient; the processing unit sending the client a copy of the confirmation record (Figure 26); and the processing unit storing information about the confirmation

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record and the registration account in the email database, (paragraph [0038], line 1 to [0047], line 12; paragraph [0059], line 1 to paragraph [0061], line 8; and paragraph [0065], lines 9-13).

A review of the cited references to the Sykes specification, reveals that **Sykes fails disclose a method whereby the third party verification sends or resends the original message to the intended recipient.** Specifically, the portions of the Sykes specification, as cited by the Examiner in the Final office Action, disclose the following method:

- A method and system for archiving and/or verifying electronic communications. The method and system provide verification of an email sent by a sender to a recipient, comprising receiving a copy of an email as an addressee; indexing the email according to at least one of sender, recipient, date, or subject matter; and storing an exact copy of the email as received. The method and system also provide for secure electronic communication between a sender and at least one recipient, comprising receiving from the sender view a secure internet connection a message and the email address of at least one intended recipient of the message; **sending an email message to the at least one intended recipient of the message that a message is waiting**; transmitting the message to

the at least one intended recipient via a secure internet connection established by the at least one intended recipient; and sending an email message to the sender that the at least one recipient has been sent the message. The method and system also provide for transmitting a facsimile for a sender to a recipient, the comprising: receiving an electronic facsimile message from the sender together with the facsimile number of the recipient; storing a copy of the electronic facsimile message; transmitting the facsimile message to the facsimile number of the recipient.¹⁰

Evidence that Sykes fails to disclose a delivery method as disclosed in the instant application is further found in the Sykes specification (and cited by the Examiner in her Final Office Action), whereby Sykes discloses:

- **As shown in FIG. 23, at 100, the Sender securely uploads email message to Third Party Archiving and Verification Provider. At 102, Third Party Archiving and Verification Provider emails Recipient that an message is waiting. At 104, Recipient securely downloads message from Third Party Archiving and Verification Provider. At 106, Third Party Archiving and**

¹⁰ Sykes abstract, US publication number 2002/0129108, as cited by Examiner in the Final Office Action, page 4, paragraph 3.

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Verification Provider emails Sender when Recipient receives message.¹¹

In contrast, Applicant's claim 1 does not disclose a method of sending a "verifiable" email message by storing an exact copy of an email message received from a client, for future retrieval by an intended recipient, by way of a download from a website accessed by the intended recipient, per the method disclosed in Sykes.

Rather, the method disclosed in Applicant's claim 1 comprises a client sending a request for either a registered or certified email message to an independent third party provider (the "Processing Unit"). **The independent third party provider re-sends the email message directly to the intended recipient, as identified by the Client, from the Processing Unit.**

Specifically, Applicant refers to the specification of the instant application:

- The present inventive device is distinct from the prior art because it acts as an independent, verification that the e-mail was sent; said confirmation is achieved by the invention **sending the e-mail message on behalf of the sender**, tracking the electronic mail

¹¹ Sykes specification, US publication number 2002/0129108, paragraph 59, line 1, to paragraph 61, line 8, as cited by Examiner in the Final Office Action, page 5, paragraph 1.

routing, and providing the client with a digital certificate that verifies the time and date when the electronic message was sent, and when it was received.¹²

- The present invention discloses a system, method and process to facilitate three primary functions as follow below.

(i) Registered or Certified Email by an independent authority wherein the originator/sender of the electronic mail is identified.

Method one is an independent verification that an electronic mail (including all attachments thereto) was sent to the intended recipient (as identified by the Client) and the time and date of submission (when the electronic mail was sent) and the time and date of delivery to the intended recipient. **Verification is a function of the processing unit who sends the electronic mail independent of the Client, albeit on behalf of the Client, who is identified as the sender/originator of the electronic message.** Upon delivery to the recipient, the Client shall receive a confirmation of the time and date in the form of a digital certificate.¹³

¹² Nassiri specification, US Publication Number 2002/0046250, paragraph 21, line 1 to line 8.

¹³ Nassiri specification, US Publication Number 2002/0046250, paragraph 45, line 1 to line 3; and paragraph 46, line 1 to line 14.

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- Turning descriptively to the drawings, the Client utilizes the invention in one of three manners as disclosed above. With reference to FIG. 1, a Registered or Certified Email by an independent authority (the processing unit) is depicted wherein the originator/sender of the electronic mail is identified. In this embodiment, the Client (the sender/originator of the electronic mail) sends the electronic mail to the intended recipient independently to the intended recipient. Additionally, the Client sends a copy of the email either independently, or as a "cc" or "bcc" to the Processing Unit. **The Processing Unit re-sends the email on the Client's behalf as a registered or certified electronic email message to the intended recipient, as identified by the Client.**¹⁴

Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose a method whereby a client has an independent third party provider send an original email message directly to an intended recipient and whereby the third party provider provides delivery confirmation in the form of a digital certificate. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Sykes and that claim 1 is patentable over Sykes.¹⁵

¹⁴ Nassiri specification, US Publication Number 2002/0046250,, paragraph 50, lines 1 to 13.

¹⁵ Applicant notes that claim 29 of the instant application discloses a method whereby the intended recipient is advised via email that an

**2. THE METHOD OF EMAIL "VERIFICATION" IN THE INSTANT
APPLICATION IS NOT DISCLOSED BY SYKES**

In the Final Office Action, Examiner states¹⁶: that in reference to claim 1, Sykes discloses a method and system for archiving, registering, and **verifying** electronic communications transmitted between clients and recipients via a network (i.e. internet), (abstract and paragraph [0004], lines 1-13). Specifically, Examiner states that Sykes discloses the third party archiving and verification system to comprise: ¹⁷

- The method for registering and certifying an electronic message, the system and method further comprising a client, an intended recipient, a website (i.e. third party archiving and verification website, Figures 4-22), a processing unit (i.e. third party archiving and verification server), an email database, **a means (i.e. third party archiving and verification provider)** to register the electronic message, the system and method, (abstract;

email is "waiting" for the intended recipient at the Processing Unit. However, the method of delivery in claim 29 is analogous to that disclosed in claim 1 of the instant application; it is only temporary and is dependent on verification criteria input. That is, upon verification of the intended recipient's identity, the email is delivered directly to the intended recipient by the Processing Unit.

¹⁶ Application/Control Number 09/982,145, Final Office Action, pp 4-5.

¹⁷ Application/Control Number 09/982,145, Final Office Action, pp 4-5.

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paragraph [0004], lines 1-13; and paragraph [0038], line 1 to paragraph [0040], line 17), comprising the steps of:

- The client accessing the website and establishing a registration account; the processing unit assigning a code (i.e. account ID) to the registration account of the client, (paragraph [0048], line 1 to paragraph [0049], line 16 and Figure 4); and
- The processing unit receiving the electronic message, the electronic message being from the client; the processing unit storing information about the electronic message and the registration account in the email database; the processing unit resending the electronic message to the intended recipient as identified by the client in the registration account; the processing unit tracking the date the electronic message was sent by the processing unit; the processing unit tracking the date the electronic message was received by the intended recipient; **the processing unit creating a confirmation record (i.e. message table entry) that comprises the date the electronic message was sent and the date the electronic message was received by the intended recipient; the processing unit sending the client a copy of the confirmation record (Figure 26);** and the processing unit storing information

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about the confirmation record and the registration account in the email database, (paragraph [0038], line 1 to [0047], line 12; paragraph [0059], line 1 to paragraph [0061], line 8; and paragraph [0065], lines 9-13).

Applicant argues that the above cited “verification” method Examiner states is disclosed in Sykes is not analogous to the method disclosed in the instant application, as amended in this second response to the Final Office Action. In fact, Applicant notes that the references to Sykes, as cited by the Examiner, read precisely as follow in the Sykes specification:

- A method and system for archiving and/or **verifying electronic communications**. The method and system provide verification of an email sent by a sender to a recipient, comprising receiving a copy of an email as an addressee; indexing the email according to at least one of sender, recipient, date, or subject matter; **and storing an exact copy of the email as received**. The method and system also provide for secure electronic communication between a sender and at least one recipient, comprising receiving from the sender view a secure internet connection a message and the email address of at least one intended recipient of the message; sending an email message to the at least one intended recipient of the message that a message is waiting; transmitting the message to

the at least one intended recipient via a secure internet connection established by the at least one intended recipient; and sending an email message to the sender that the at least one recipient has been sent the message.¹⁸

- This invention relates to archiving and/or verifying electronic communications. According to a first aspect of the invention relating to sending verifiable email messages, the invention comprises **addressing the email to a third party verification provider, either as an addressee or as a cc, who will index the message according to at least one of sender, date, recipient, and subject, and store an exact copy of the e-mail message.**

Similarly, the invention also relates to providing email verification of an email sent by a sender to a recipient, **comprising receiving a copy of an email as an addressee; indexing the email according to at least one of sender, recipient, date, or subject matter; and storing an exact copy of the email as received.**¹⁹

- According to a first aspect, this invention relates to a **system and a method for senders to backup and archive email to a third party server without the need for conventional backup**

¹⁸ Sykes abstract, US publication number 2002/0129108, as cited by Examiner in the Final Office Action, page 4, paragraph 3.

¹⁹ Sykes specification, US publication number 2002/0129108, as cited by Examiner in the Final Office Action, page 4, paragraph 3.

software, thereby providing proof of on-line communications.

The system and method are preferably implemented by a third party archiving and verification provider using an Application Service Provider ("ASP") model that allows a sender to use the system and method regardless of his or her location on the Internet.

An example of the structure of tables in a SQL database for implementing the system and method of this invention is shown in Appendix A, attached hereto, and incorporated herein by reference.

In the preferred embodiment, no special software is required, and an email sender can use the system without changing his standard email process.

- Referring to FIG. 1, at 22 the sender sends an email to the recipient, and to the third party archiving and verification provider either as an addressee (via the "To:" field) or as a copy (via the "CC:" field). ... At 24, the email message is received by the third party archiving and verification provider. ... **The email message remains stored with the third party archiving and verification provider for a time determined by the sender's user profile, which was established at the time the sender opened its account, as from time to time amended.** Alternatively, the user could be allowed to select the time for storage at the time the message is sent. The user can also extend the time for storage later, as described below.

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Applicant argues that the method of verifying and/or confirming an email message in the instant application is not disclosed by Sykes. To state the obvious, the present inventive device, offers archival only as an option for record keeping, and not as a mandatory means of verification of the email itself. As illustrated above, Sykes method of “verification” relies exclusively on archiving an exact copy of the original email for comparison at a future date, if needed. The internal (host computer of the verification and archive provider) verification record (i.e. the copy of the original email) is coupled with the time of submission and delivery of the original mandatory email. The original sender receives an email with the time and date that the email was received from the sender and when it was retrieved by the intended recipient.²⁰

More importantly, and perhaps significantly, the method disclosed by Sykes does not verify the “contents” of an email, notwithstanding a “verification record”, per the method disclosed in the instant application. To verify the content of an original email at a future date, the requesting (authorized) party must request a “notarized” version of the email from the archives of the verification provider as insurance against manipulation by an outside party²¹. In the method disclosed by Applicant’s instant application, the contents of the original email message are contained in the verification record along with the time and date of submission

²⁰ Get Sykes figure depicting this and reference

²¹ Sykes specification, US publication number 2002/0129108, FIGS and 10 and 12.

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and delivery of the email. Depending on the service verification request, the confirmation record may also include biometric information, and other requested information, such as a birth date or social security number. The contents of the verification record in its entirety are provided to the sender of the original email. The independent third party provider does not retain/archive a copy of the email contents, unless requested to by the original sender of the email. The only information archived by the independent third party provider is information regarding the time and date of submission and delivery and the code associated with the digital certificate that comprises the verification record. Specifically, the specification of the instant application discloses:

- The present invention discloses a system, method and process to facilitate three primary functions as follow below.
- Registered or Certified Email by an independent authority wherein the originator/sender of the electronic mail is identified. Method one is an independent verification that an electronic mail (including all attachments thereto) was sent to the intended recipient (as identified by the Client) and the time and date of submission (when the electronic mail was sent) and the time and date of delivery to the intended recipient. Verification is a function of the processing unit who sends the electronic mail independent of the Client, albeit on behalf of the Client, who is identified as the sender/originator of the electronic message. Upon delivery to the

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recipient, **the Client shall receive a confirmation of the time and date in the form of a digital certificate;**

- Registered or Certified Email by an independent authority wherein the originator/sender of the electronic mail is anonymous. **Method two is an independent verification that an electronic mail (including all attachments thereto) was sent to the intended recipient (as identified by the Client) and the time and date of submission (when the electronic mail was sent) and the time and date of delivery to the intended recipient.** Verification is a function of the processing unit who sends the electronic mail independent of the Client, albeit on behalf of the Client who is not identified. In this instance, the Processing Unit is identified as the sender of the electronic message only. Upon delivery to the recipient, **the Client shall receive a confirmation of the time and date in the form of a digital certificate;** and
- Registered or Certified Email by an independent authority wherein the originator/sender of the electronic mail requests that the recipient's identity be verified prior to receipt of the electronic mail. **Method three is an independent verification of the recipient's identity (as identified by the Client) by an independent authority prior to the recipient receiving the electronic mail.** Per methods one and two above, in this instance, the independent authority (the processing unit) confirms the time

**and date of submission (when the electronic mail was sent)
and the time and date of delivery to the intended recipient.**

Verification is a function of the processing unit who sends the electronic mail independent of the Client, albeit on behalf of the Client, who may or may not be identified. Upon delivery to the recipient, the **Client shall receive a confirmation of the time and date in the form of a digital certificate, and a confirmation that the intended recipient's identity was verified before receiving the electronic mail from the Client.**²²

- The Processing Unit keeps an internal record of the account request and a copy of the email content (if requested). Upon personal identity verification, the Processing Unit submits the electronic message to the intended recipient, as identified by the Client in the registration account, and tracks the submission and delivery cycle of the electronic message. The electronic message indicates whether the Client is the originator of the email or whether the Processing Unit is sending the electronic message on behalf of an anonymous entity. **Upon delivery of the electronic message, the Processing Unit sends the Client a "Confirmation Record", typically in the form of a digital certificate, of the time and date of the submission and of the delivery of the electronic**

²² Nassiri specification, US Publication Number 2002/0046250, paragraph 45, line 1 to paragraph 48, line 18.

message. The Confirmation Record further contains the information used to verify the intended recipient's identity.²³

As noted above, not only are the verification records of the inventive devices different in substance, but in form. Sykes verification record to the sender of the original email comprises the form of an email with information contained within it. **The verification record of the present inventive device is in the form of a digital certificate that is tamper proof;** hence the distinction that the verification record disclosed by the instant application “verifies” the content of the email without the need to utilize the independent third party provider in the future .

Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose a method whereby the method of verification is based on information other than an archived record of the original email. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Sykes and that claim 1 is patentable over Sykes.

Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose a method whereby the third party provider provides a verification record in the form of a digital certificate. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Sykes and that claim 1 is patentable over Sykes.

²³ Nassiri specification, US Publication Number 2002/0046250, paragraph 67, line 1 to line 18.

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Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose a method whereby the third party provider provides a verification record in the form of a digital certificate that contains personal identity information. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Sykes and that claim 1 is patentable over Sykes.

Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose a method whereby the third party provider provides a verification record in the form of a digital certificate that contains biometric information. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Sykes and that claim 1 is patentable over Sykes.

**3. THE METHOD OF THE PROCESSING UNIT (INDEPENDENT THIRD
PARTY VERIFICATION) IN THE INSTANT APPLICATION IS NOT
DISCLOSED BY SYKES**

Applicant submits that the purpose and function of the independent third party verification provider in the instant application and that disclosed by Sykes are fundamentally distinct. In the instant application, the third party verification provider (in addition to being accessible via a website) comprises an actual physical place of business that can be accessed for the services disclosed in the specification: namely, a registered or certified email request, an anonymous registered or certified email request, or a request for identity verification of an intended recipient. With respect to the latter request, maintaining a physical presence is of the utmost importance in the event that the intended recipient be required to provide either original hard copy personal identity identification, or to

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provide biometrics as a proof of identity prior to receiving the intended email.

Specifically, the method of the instant application discloses:

- **A request for identity verification prior to the receipt of registered or certified mail entails the Processing Unit contacting the intended recipient prior to sending the electronic message, and any attachments thereto.** The Processing Unit verifies that the email account to which the electronic message is to be routed corresponds to the identity of an intended recipient, prior to sending the electronic message.

Alternatively, the Processing Unit may hold an electronic message on behalf of the sender, **whereby the intended recipient is verified in person at a service center maintained by the present invention.** Upon verification of the recipient's identity, the Processing Unit notifies the Client of when the electronic message was delivered to the intended recipient. Notification typically comprises a digital certificate that is emailed to the Client. If requested, the processing Unit retains a copy of the message contents, including any attachments, for future reference. In any event, the Processing Unit retains a record of the time and date the message was sent and when it was delivered for future reference.²⁴

- **Registered or Certified Email by an independent authority wherein the originator/sender of the electronic mail requests that the recipient's**

²⁴ Nassiri specification, US Publication Number 2002/0046250, paragraph 29, line 1 to line 20.

identity be verified prior to receipt of the electronic mail. Method three is an independent verification of the recipient's identity (as identified by the Client) by an independent authority prior to the recipient receiving the electronic mail. Per methods one and two above, in this instance, the independent authority (the processing unit) confirms the time and date of submission (when the electronic mail was sent) and the time and date of delivery to the intended recipient.

Verification is a function of the processing unit who sends the electronic mail independent of the Client, albeit on behalf of the Client, who may or may not be identified. Upon delivery to the recipient, the Client shall receive a confirmation of the time and date in the form of a digital certificate, and a confirmation that the intended recipient's identity was verified before receiving the electronic mail from the Client.²⁵

- The Client selects the appropriate service by way of a pull down menu on the website with the available options: registered mail, certified mail, return receipt mail, delivery confirmation, submission confirmation, and the like, along with a request for Identity Verification. Identity shall be established by criteria selected by the sender using a pull down menu on the website.

The recipient's identity may be verified by:

- (i) having the intended recipient using a predetermined electronic code provided by the Client; or

²⁵ Nassiri specification, US Publication Number 2002/0046250, paragraph 48, line 1 to line 18.

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- (ii) having the intended recipient using a predetermined electronic code provided by the Processing Unit;
 - (iii) having the intended recipient go to a Processing Unit service center for an in-person verification using the intended recipient's personal identification, including, but not limited to, personal paperwork such as a birth certificate, a passport, a driver's license and the like; or
 - (iv) having the intended recipient provide bio-metric verification; or
 - (v) other means whereby the intended recipient utilizes a predetermined code, a password or other means of encryption.²⁶
- "Identity Verification" denotes a variety of services offered by the inventive device. The services may comprise, but are not limited to, verification using digital certificates, biometric information such as a thumbprint, voiceprint, retinal scan, a graphical, hand written signature, or personal identity papers such as a drivers license, a passport, and the like.²⁷

In contrast, the method disclosed by Sykes fails to disclose any method of identity verification prior to an intended recipient being allowed to access its website to download the waiting email. The method of Sykes fails to disclose the ability of the sender to independently request that the recipient be identified by

²⁶ Nassiri specification, US Publication Number 2002/0046250, paragraph 58, line 1, to paragraph 63, line 3.

²⁷ Nassiri specification, US Publication Number 2002/0046250, paragraph 84, line 1 to line 7.

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either personal identity documents or biometric information. In fact, the method disclosed by Sykes is incapable of providing any identification verification services as a priori to receiving the email. In fact, the method disclosed by Sykes only verifies that the intended recipient's email address is registered in order to gain access to the website to download the email being held for the intended recipient. Specifically, the method of Sykes discloses:

- Where the recipient does not have an account with the Third Party Archiving and Verification Provider, the system and method can include a verification system to make sure that the message is delivered to the proper recipient. As described above, when the sender clicks the "Confirm" button on the FIG. 21 page, the system checks to see if the addressee in the "To:" has an account with the Third Party Archiving and Verification Provider. If the recipient does not have an account, the system sends an email that instructs the user to go to Third Party Archiving and Verification Provider's website and create an account. After the recipient creates an account, with the Third Party Archiving and Verification Provider's website, the system generates a 64 character string that relates to that user's email address. The system then sends an email to that address with the 64 character ID embedded in a link. When recipient clicks on that link, the system verifies that the recipient's email address is valid because they referenced an ID that was sent to that email address. The same ID is mapped to the same address in the Third Party Archiving and Verification Provider's database. After the user clicks the link, the

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Third Party Archiving and Verification Provider's system marks the recipient's account as active, then searches the database for any email messages that do not yet have an ID assigned to it, and which also have the recipient's email address in the "To:" line. After the system finds the email messages meeting these criteria, the messages are then assigned to that userID. Thus when the recipient logs in for the first time, the message or messages addressed to the recipient will be waiting for the recipient.²⁸

Moreover, there exist fundamental issues between the method disclosed in Sykes and the present inventive device with respect to access to the archived records and management of the archived records. The method disclosed in the instant application does not permit retrieval of archival records by outside parties, or manipulation of archived records by outside parties. Management and control of the verification records is controlled by the independent third party provider, and access (i.e. requesting a copy of the archived confirmation record) is restricted to the original client that tendered the service request, or an authorized third party, as designated by the independent third party provider. In contrast, the method disclosed by Sykes allows the originator of the email to access the archived files, and to manipulate the archived files according to the needs of the account holder. Specifically, Sykes discloses a method whereby:

²⁸ Sykes specification, US publication number 2002/0129108, paragraph 63, line 1 to line 30.

- **The third party verification provider preferably provides the sender with access to the stored email messages via a web browser, allowing the sender to manage the stored messages, deleting unneeded messages, extending the storage time for messages, and requesting verified copies of messages.²⁹**
- The system and method of the present invention provide a secure method for Internet users to communicate registered emails on the Internet without using conventional email clients such as Microsoft's Outlook Express or Netscape's Network Navigator. Instead, messages are created and read inside a web browser such as Microsoft's Internet Explorer, or Netscape's Navigator. Further, unlike conventional email, the system and method of this invention allow the sender to know if and when a message has been read. **The system and method allow the sender to see the state of any message, i.e., the user can see that the message has been delivered and read by the recipient, in contrast to conventional email where a user sends a message and is only notified when and if the recipient replies.³⁰**

²⁹ Sykes specification, US publication number 2002/0129108, paragraph 47, line 8, to line 12.

³⁰ Sykes specification, US publication number 2002/0129108, paragraph 59, line 1 to line 14.

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Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose a method whereby the independent third party provider provides a verification of identity as a priori to the intended recipient receiving the email. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Sykes and that claim 1 is patentable over Sykes.

Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose a method whereby the independent third party provider maintains exclusive control and dominion over the archived confirmation records. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Sykes and that claim 1 is patentable over Sykes.

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CONCLUSION CLAIM 1 IN VIEW OF SYKES

Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose a method whereby a client has an independent third party provider send an original email message directly to an intended recipient and whereby the third party provider provides delivery confirmation in the form of a digital certificate. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Sykes and that claim 1 is patentable over Sykes.

Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose a method whereby the method of verification is based on information other than an archived record of the original

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email. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Sykes and that claim 1 is patentable over Sykes.

Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose a method whereby the third party provider provides a verification record in the form of a digital certificate. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Sykes and that claim 1 is patentable over Sykes.

Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose a method whereby the third party provider provides a verification record in the form of a digital certificate that contains personal identity information. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Sykes and that claim 1 is patentable over Sykes.

Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose a method whereby the third party provider provides a verification record in the form of a digital certificate that contains biometric information. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Sykes and that claim 1 is patentable over Sykes.

Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose a method whereby the independent third party provider provides a verification of identity as a priori to the intended recipient receiving the email. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Sykes and that claim 1 is patentable over Sykes.

Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose a method whereby the independent third party provider maintains exclusive control and dominion over the archived

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confirmation records. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Sykes and that claim 1 is patentable over Sykes.

With regard to claim 1, Applicant respectfully submits that Examiner withdraw its objection and that Applicant's claim 1, as amended, be allowed per the arguments put forth above.

CLAIM 15 IN VIEW OF SYKES

In reference to Applicant's claim 15, Examiner states that Sykes discloses a method and system for archiving, registering, and verifying electronic communications transmitted between clients and recipients via a network (i.e. Internet), (abstract and paragraph [0004], lines 1-13).

Examiner states that Sykes discloses the third party archiving and verification provider system to comprise³¹:

- A system and method for registering and certifying an electronic message, the system and method further comprising a client, an intended recipient, a local computer system, a website (i.e. third party archiving and verification website, Figures 4-22), a processing unit (i.e. third party archiving and verification server), an email

³¹ Application/Control Number 09/982,145, Final Office Action, pp 6-7.

database, the means (i.e. third party archiving and verification server) to register the electronic message, (abstract; paragraph [0004], lines 1-13; and paragraph [0038], line to paragraph [0040], line 17), the system and method comprising the steps of:

- The client accessing the website and establishing a registration account; the processing unit assigning a code (i.e. account ID) to the registration account of the client, (paragraph [0048], line 1 to paragraph [0049], line 16 and Figure 4); and « The processing unit receiving the electronic message, the electronic message being from the client; the processing unit storing information about the electronic message and the registration account in the email database; the processing unit resending the electronic message to the intended recipient as identified by the client in the registration account; the processing unit tracking the date the electronic message was sent by the processing unit; the processing unit tracking the date the electronic message was received by the intended recipient; the processing unit creating a confirmation record (i.e. message table entry) that comprises the date the electronic message was sent to the intended recipient, and the date the electronic message was received by the intended recipient; the processing unit sending the client a copy of the confirmation record (Figure 26); and the processing unit storing information about the confirmation record and the registration account in the email

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database, (paragraph [0038], line 1 to [0047], line 12; paragraph [0059], line 1 to paragraph [0061], line S; and paragraph [0065], lines 9-13).

Applicant traverses. Applicant respectfully submits the foregoing arguments presented with respect to claim 1, in their entirety, with regard to Applicant's claim 15.

Moreover, Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose any method of sending a verifiable email message that comprises **using an anonymous client**.

Specifically, the specification of the instant application discloses:

- The present invention discloses a system, method and process to facilitate three primary functions as follow below.
- **Registered or Certified Email by an independent authority wherein the originator/sender of the electronic mail is anonymous.** Method two is an independent verification that an electronic mail (including all attachments thereto) was sent to the intended recipient (as identified by the Client) and the time and date of submission (when the electronic mail was sent) and the time and date of delivery to the intended recipient. **Verification is a function of the processing unit who sends the electronic mail independent of the Client, albeit on behalf of the Client who is not identified. In this instance, the Processing Unit is identified**

as the sender of the electronic message only. Upon delivery to the recipient, the Client shall receive a confirmation of the time and date in the form of a digital certificate.³²

- **With reference to FIG. 2, the Processing Unit does not send the electronic mail to the intended recipient on behalf of the Client, even though the Client is the originator of the electronic message.** Per the method depicted in FIG. 1, the Client accesses the inventive device via the website, establishes a registration account which is assigned an account name and corresponding code or password by the Processing Unit for internal tracking purposes. The Client submits the electronic message, and any attachments thereto, along with the following information: the Client's account information, the Client's name, the Client's email address, the recipient's name, the recipient's email address, the service or services selected, the date the email message is to be sent on behalf of the Client, and any special requests or instructions.
- The Processing Unit keeps an internal record of the account request and a copy of the email content (if requested). The Processing Unit submits the electronic message to the intended recipient, as identified by the Client in the registration account, and

³² Nassiri specification, US Publication Number 2002/0046250, paragraph 45, line 1 to line 3, and paragraph 47, line 1 to line 14.

tracks the submission and delivery cycle of the electronic message.

In this embodiment of the present invention, The Client remains anonymous and the Processing Unit is identified as the sender. The recipient is notified by the Processing Unit that the Processing Unit is acting as a delivery vehicle for an anonymous identity, and that the originator of the message will be notified of the delivery to the recipient. Should the recipient elect, recipient has the option of posting a reply for the originator of the electronic message with the Processing Unit. Upon delivery of the anonymous electronic message, the Processing Unit sends the Client a "Confirmation Record", typically in the form of a digital certificate, of the time and date of the submission and of the delivery of the electronic message. If the recipient posted a reply for the originator with the Processing Unit, the reply will be contained in the Confirmation Record as well. In the event the email message was undeliverable, the Confirmation Record will indicate the attempted delivery time and date. The Processing Unit archives the Digital Certificate and the corresponding account information for future use and retrieval.³³

³³ Nassiri specification, US Publication Number 2002/0046250, paragraph 55, line 1 to paragraph 56, line 25.

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Applicant notes that Examiner states:

Although Sykes discloses substantial features of the claimed invention, the reference fails to explicitly disclose the method comprising; an anonymous client, a local computing system, the anonymous client using the local computing system to access a website; the processing unit notifying the intended recipient that the electronic message has been sent on behalf of the anonymous client; the intended recipient choosing to post a reply for the anonymous client, and the confirmation record comprising the reply posted for the anonymous client. Nonetheless, these features would have been obvious modifications to the aforementioned method, as disclosed by Sykes, for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, as further evidenced by Gabber.³⁴

Applicant submits that Sykes clearly fails to disclose the use of an anonymous client, as pointed out by the Examiner. Applicant respectfully submits that the disclosure of the present inventive device is not an obvious modification to the method disclosed in the instant application. Examiners must consider comparative data in the specification which is intended to illustrate the claimed invention in reaching a conclusion with regard to the obviousness of the claims.³⁵

³⁴ Application/Control No. 09/982,145, Final Office Action, page 8, paragraph 2.

³⁵ *In re Margolis*, 785 F.2d 1029, 228 USPQ 940 (Fed. Cir. 1986).

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Too, When obviousness is based on the teachings of multiple prior art references, the movant must also establish some "suggestion, teaching, or motivation" that would have led a person of ordinary skill in the art to combine the relevant prior art teachings in the manner claimed.³⁶ This is because "[c]ombining prior art references without evidence of such a suggestion, teaching, or motivation simply takes the inventor's disclosure as a blueprint for piecing together the prior art to defeat patentability—the essence of hindsight." Dembiczak, 175 F.3d at 999. Therefore, we have consistently held that a person of ordinary skill in the art must not only have had some motivation to combine the prior art teachings, but some motivation to combine the prior art teachings in the particular manner claimed.³⁷

The failure of others to provide a feasible solution to a longstanding problem is probative of nonobviousness. The "rationale here is that if the patented solution were obvious, others would have come up with the solution first."³⁸ Applicant notes that in the method disclosed by Sykes, despite the detailed disclosure of the options available to the end user (the sender), **there exists no mention of**

³⁶ See *Tec Air, Inc. v. Denso Mfg. Mich. Inc.*, 192 F.3d 1353, 1359–60 (Fed. Cir. 1999); *Pro-Mold & Tool Co. v. Great Lakes Plastics, Inc.*, 75 F.3d 1568, 1572 (Fed. Cir. 1996).

³⁷ See, e.g., *In re Kotzab*, 217 F.3d 1365, 1371 (Fed. Cir. 2000).

³⁸ *Indian Head*, 859 F Supp at 1104, 36 USPO 2d at 1323.

the use of an alias or an anonymous identity to shield the original sender.³⁹

Applicant further submits, that despite the detailed disclosure of Sykes, **there exists no mention of a third party provider that clearly indicates the third party provider is acting on behalf of the anonymous original sender, per the method disclosed in the instant application.**

CONCLUSION OF CLAIM 15 IN VIEW OF SYKES

Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose a method whereby an anonymous client may send either a registered or a certified email message using a third party provider. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Sykes and that claim 15 is patentable over Sykes.

Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose a method whereby the third party provider notifies the intended recipient that the electronic message has been sent on behalf of the anonymous client, and whereby the third party provider identifies itself as the sender. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Sykes and that claim 15 is patentable over Sykes.

Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose a method whereby the intended recipient may choose to post a reply email message for the anonymous client, using the third party provider as an intermediary. As such, Applicant submits that

³⁹ Sykes specification, US Publication No. 2002/0129108, FIGS 1 to 27.

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its method is not anticipated by Sykes and that claim 15 is patentable over Sykes.

Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose a method whereby the confirmation record comprises the reply email message posted for the anonymous client from the intended recipient, and whereby said confirmation record is sent to the anonymous client. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Sykes and that claim 15 is patentable over Sykes.

With regard to claim 15, in view of Sykes, Applicant respectfully submits that Examiner withdraw its objection and that Applicant's claim 15, as amended, be allowed per the arguments put forth above.

CLAIM 15 IN VIEW OF GABBER

Examiner states that:

In an analogous art, Gabber discloses a method for transmitting electronic messages between an anonymous client and a recipient via a computer network (i.e. Internet), (abstract and column 2, line 52 to column 3, line 2). Gabber further discloses the method involves employing a local computing system (Figure 1-item 105a), and the client using the local computing system to access a website (column 4, line 20 to column 5, line 7). Gabber also discloses a processing unit

(i.e. Figure 2), (column 5, line 25-36), notifying (i.e. substituted real source address with alias address consisting of a printable string of characters) the intended recipient that the electronic message has been sent on behalf of the anonymous client, (column 6, line 41 to column 7, line 6); and the intended recipient choosing to post a reply for the anonymous client, (column 8, lines 27-50), These modifications to the aforementioned method, as disclosed by Sykes, would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art because one would have been so motivated to facilitate "bi-directional e-mail communication over a network without compromising the sender's identity", and thereby increasing user privacy, (Gabber column 2, lines 1-5).⁴⁰

Applicant respectfully traverses. Applicant submits that Gabber fails to disclose the method of the instant application, as disclosed in the specification and the amended claims. Applicant is mindful of Examiner's second objection that "the features upon which Applicant relies (i.e. that the client remain anonymous but the email address that sends the email message to the intended recipient remains constant and verifiable) are not recited in the rejected claims."⁴¹

⁴⁰ Application/Control No. 09/982,145, Final Office Action, page 8, paragraph 3, to page 9, paragraph 1.

⁴¹ Application/Control No. 09/982,145, Final Office Action, page 3, paragraph 2.

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Applicant has amended the claim language to address the Examiner's concerns and submits further remarks with respect to Gabber.

Applicant refers to the Gabber specification, as cited by the Examiner, which reads:

- A system for, and method of, **generating an alias source address** for an electronic mail ("e-mail") message having a real source address and a destination address and a computer network, such as the Internet, including the system or the method. In one embodiment, the system includes an alias source address generator that employs the destination address to generate the alias source address. **The system further includes an alias source address substitutor that substitutes the alias source address for the real source address. This removes the real source address from the e-mail message and thereby renders the sender, located at the real source address, anonymous.** Further-described are systems and methods for forwarding reply e-mail and filtering reply e-mail based on alias source address.⁴²
- To address the above-discussed deficiencies of the prior art, the present invention introduces a system for and method of, generating an alias source address for an electronic mail ("e-mail") message having a real source address and a destination address and a computer network, such as the Internet, including the system or the method. In one embodiment,

⁴² Gabber abstract, United States Patent No. 6,591,291.

the system includes an alias source address generator that employs the destination address to generate the alias source address. The system further includes an alias source address substitutor that substitutes the alias source address for the real source address. **This removes the real source address from the e-mail message and thereby renders the sender, located at the real source address, anonymous.** The system further includes an e-mail forwarder that receives e-mail addressed to the alias source address, computes the real source address, and forwards the e-mail to the real source address.⁴³

- The method 300 ends in an end step 370, derivation of the alias source address having been accomplished. As with all of the other steps 310, 320, 330, 340, 350, the step 360 is unnecessary, unless the desired result is an alias source address consisting of a printable string of characters. The alias source address may then be substituted for the real source address, perhaps with an alias source address substitutor. Employing the above-described exemplary method 300 to an e-mail message having a real source address of, for example, "foo_bar@bell-labs.com" and a destination address of "www.yahoo.com" can be converted to "wxOnlqlUUEXJxzwVSsfKgW". This can be pre-appended to the domain name and top-level domain of an exemplary remailer to yield: "wxOnlqlUUEXJxzwVSsfKgW@lpwa.com", a destination-address-specific,

⁴³ Gabber Summary of Invention, United States Patent No. 6,591,291, column 2, line 52, to column 3, line 2.

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SMTP-valid, alias source address. Employing a less complex method wherein the compressing, hashing, appending and encrypting, as set forth in the method 300 above, do not occur can yield different results. For example, an e-mail message having a real source address of, for example, "foo_bar@bell-labs.com" and a destination address of "www.yahoo.com" can be converted to "foo_bar.bell-labs.com.www.yahoo.com" (nothing more than a trivial string concatenation). This can be pre-appended to the domain name and top-level domain of an exemplary remailer to yield:

"www.yahoo.com.foo_bar.bell-labs.com@lpwa.com". This far less complex (and less secure) method falls well within the broad scope of the present invention, as well. Note that the steps set forth in the method 300 are not employed in the less complex method.⁴⁴

- Accordingly, the method 400 begins in a start step 410 and proceeds to a step 420, wherein a reply e-mail message is received from the recipient. **The method 400 continues in a step 430, wherein the alias source address is read from the reply e-mail message. Next, the alias source address is compared to alias source addresses contained in a sender-supplied list of rejected alias source addresses in a decisional step 440. If the alias source address matches one of the items in the list (taking the YES branch of the decisional step 440,**

⁴⁴ Gabber, United States Patent No. 6,591,291, column 6, line 41, to column 7, line 6.

the reply e-mail is deleted and the sender spared of its receipt. If the alias source address does not match any of the items in the list (taking the NO branch of the decisional step 440, the method continues in a step 450 wherein the sender's real source address is derived (perhaps by reversing the exemplary method 300 described above or perhaps by way of a real source address generator that generates a real source address from an alias source address) and substituted into the reply e-mail for the alias source address, perhaps by way of a real source address substitutor. Next, the reply-e-mail is forwarded to the sender in a step 460. The method ends in an end step 470, filtered forwarding having been accomplished.⁴⁵

With respect to the foregoing references cited by the Examiner in the final Office Action Applicant submits that Gabber fails to disclose the method of the instant application.

Applicant submits that in its entirety Gabber fundamentally discloses a method that comprises sending an **“alias source email message”**, the purpose of which is to generate emails that are untraceable, as is typical in the case of spam or phishing. Gabber does not disclose a method, per the present inventive device, whereby the sender of the email can be readily ascertained and replied to. In fact, Gabber specifically states that one the inventive devices attributes is; “

⁴⁵ Gabber, United States Patent No. 6,591,291, column 8, line 27 to line

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privacy (the recipient can not determine the real source address given the alias source address".⁴⁶

The "anonymous client"⁴⁷ Examiner attributes per the method of Gabber is distinct from the "anonymous client" as disclosed in claim 15 of the pending application. Moreover, Applicant respectfully submits that the Gabber specification **at no point refers to an "anonymous client" and that the reference is not analogous in method or definition to the disclosure of the instant application.**

Specifically, the Gabber specification consistently refers to an "alias source email address".⁴⁸ Said alias email address having the function of replacing a verifiable email address for the purpose of deceiving the intended recipient of the origin of the email message.

Per the Examiner's cited reference, Gabber specifically discloses a method whereby:

⁴⁶ Gabber, United States Patent No. 6,591,291, column 3, line 40 to line 43.

⁴⁷ Application/Control No. 09/982,145, Final Office Action, page 8, paragraph 3.

⁴⁸ For this reason, Applicant prefers to refer to Gabber as an "alias source email address". Applicant respectfully submits that no text or disclosure in Gabber's specification supports the contention of an "anonymous client" per the method of claim 15 in the pending application. Rather, an anonymous email address.

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- [the] substitutor that substitutes the alias source address for the real source address. This removes the real source address from the e-mail message. **This removes the real source address from the e-mail message and thereby renders the sender, located at the real source address, anonymous.**⁴⁹

The method of Gabber discloses **generating an alias source email address for an electronic mail message** having a real source address and a destination address. While providing the client with an alias source email address indirectly serves to shroud the client's identity, per the method disclosed by Gabber, **there is no correlation between the alias source email address generated and the sender to identify the sender of the email message.**

In contrast, the method disclosed in the instant application clearly identifies the sender of the email. Specifically, the instant application discloses:

- Registered or Certified Email by an independent authority wherein the originator/sender of the electronic mail is anonymous. Method two is an independent verification that an electronic mail (including all attachments thereto) was sent to the intended recipient (as identified by the Client) and the time and date of submission (when the electronic mail was sent) and the time and date of delivery to the intended recipient. **Verification is a function of the processing unit who sends the electronic mail**

⁴⁹ Gabber, United States Patent No. 6,591,291, column 2, line 52, to column 3, line 2.

independent of the Client, albeit on behalf of the Client who is not identified. In this instance, the Processing Unit is clearly identified as the sender of the electronic message.⁵⁰

- The Processing Unit keeps an internal record of the account request and a copy of the email content (if requested). The Processing Unit submits the electronic message to the intended recipient, as identified by the Client in the registration account, and tracks the submission and delivery cycle of the electronic message. **In this embodiment of the present invention, The Client remains anonymous and the Processing Unit is identified as the sender of the email. The recipient is notified by the Processing Unit that the Processing Unit is acting as a delivery vehicle for an anonymous identity, and that the originator of the message will be notified of the delivery to the recipient. Should the recipient elect, recipient has the option of posting a reply for the originator of the electronic message with the Processing Unit. Upon delivery of the anonymous electronic message, the Processing Unit sends the Client a "Confirmation Record", typically in the form of a digital certificate, of the time and date of the submission and of the delivery of the electronic**

⁵⁰ Nassiri specification, US Publication Number 2002/0046250, paragraph 0047, line 1 to line 12.

message.⁵¹

Applicant's claim 15 clearly discloses a method whereby while the client remains anonymous, **the email address that sends the email message to the intended recipient is a disclosed identity that remains constant and verifiable** (i.e., not an alias source email address whereby the intended recipient has no way of deciphering the source, per the method of Gabber⁵²). Per the method disclosed in Applicant's claim 15, the identity of the email address sender (the third party provider) is readily provided, **only the identity of the client utilizing the third party provider is withheld from the intended recipient.**

Examiner further cites that Gabber discloses notifying (i.e. substituted real source address with alias address consisting of a printable string of characters) the intended recipient that the electronic message has been sent on behalf of the anonymous client⁵³, and that the intended recipient may choose to post a reply

⁵¹ Nassiri specification, US Publication Number 2002/0046250, paragraph 56, line 1 to line 22.

⁵² Gabber discloses a process whereby the address created bears no correlation to the sender of the sender, other than a formulaic computation. Gabber, United States Patent No. 6,591,291, column 6, line 41, to column 7, line 6.

⁵³ Application/control No. 09/982,145, Final Office Action, page 8, paragraph 3.

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for the anonymous client. With respect to Examiner's position that Gabber discloses notifying the intended recipient that an electronic message has been sent on behalf of the anonymous client, Applicant respectfully submits that the Gabber specification fails to disclose such a method.

The prior art cited by the Examiner specifically reads as follows:

- The method 300 ends in an end step 370, derivation of the alias source address having been accomplished. As with all of the other steps 310, 320, 330, 340, 350, the step 360 is unnecessary, unless the desired result is an alias source address consisting of a printable string of characters. The alias source address may then be substituted for the real source address, perhaps with an alias source address substitutor. Employing the above-described exemplary method 300 to an e-mail message having a real source address of, for example, "foo_bar@bell-labs.com" and a destination address of "www.yahoo.com" can be converted to "wxOnlqlUUEXJxzwVSsfKgW". This can be pre-appended to the domain name and top-level domain of an exemplary remailer to yield: "wxOnlqlUUEXJxzwVSsfKgW@lpwa.com", a destination-address-specific, SMTP-valid, alias source address. Employing a less complex method wherein the compressing, hashing, appending and encrypting, as set

forth in the method 300 above, do not occur can yield different results. For example, an e-mail message having a real source address of, for example, "foo_bar@bell-labs.com" and a destination address of "www.yahoo.com" can be converted to "foo_bar.bell-labs.com.www.yahoo.com" (nothing more than a trivial string concatenation). This can be pre-appended to the domain name and top-level domain of an exemplary remailer to yield: "www.yahoo.com.foo_bar.bell-labs.com@lpwa.com". This far less complex (and less secure) method falls well within the broad scope of the present invention, as well. Note that the steps set forth in the method 300 are not employed in the less complex method.⁵⁴

The foregoing method disclosed by Gabber does not "notify" the intended recipient that said intended recipient has received a message on behalf of an anonymous client. It may be self-evident to the intended recipient that the source email address has been morphed to conceal the identity of the sender, per the method of Gabber, but the **foregoing method does not constitute notification as disclosed in the method of Applicant's claim 15, whereby the intended recipient receives an email message from the third party provider, clearly**

⁵⁴ Gabber, United States Patent No. 6,591,291, column 6, line 41 to column 7, line 6.

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disclosing that the third party provider is sending an email message on behalf of an anonymous client.⁵⁵

Likewise, Examiner submits that Gabber discloses a method whereby the intended recipient may choose to post a reply for the anonymous client.⁵⁶

Applicant submits that while the recipient may respond to an alias source email message by hitting the reply button, the response email message must first pass a check sum to qualify the response, before the email message response will be received. **Moreover, the intended recipient is remains unable to decipher to whom the response is directed, other than to an alias source email address.** The originator of the email message to whom the response is directed remains a secret or unidentifiable.

The method disclosed in Applicant's claim 15 clearly identifies to whom the response is directed to, the verifiable independent third party provider, and requires no qualification that the response email message from the intended recipient satisfy a check sum test in order to be received.

⁵⁵ Nassiri specification, US Publication Number 2002/0046250, paragraphs 47 and 56.

⁵⁶ Gabber, United States Patent No. 6,591,291, column 8, line 27 to line 50.

CONCLUSION CLAIM 15 IN VIEW OF GABBER

Applicant submits that Gabber fails to disclose a method that comprises an anonymous client as disclosed in the instant application. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Gabber and that claim 15 is patentable over Gabber.

Applicant submits that Gabber fails to disclose a method whereby an anonymous client may send either a registered or a certified email message using a third party provider. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Gabber and that claim 15 is patentable over Gabber.

Applicant submits that Gabber fails to disclose a method whereby an anonymous client may send either a registered or a certified email message using a third party provider. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Gabber and that claim 15 is patentable over Gabber.

Applicant submits that Gabber fails to disclose a method whereby the third party provider tracks the date the email message was sent, and the date that the email message was received by the intended recipient. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Gabber and that claim 15 is patentable over Gabber.

Applicant submits that Gabber fails to disclose a method whereby the third party provider creates a confirmation record that comprises the date sent data and the

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date received data. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Gabber and that claim 15 is patentable over Gabber.

Applicant submits that Gabber fails to disclose a method whereby the anonymous client receives a copy of the confirmation record from the third party provider. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Gabber and that claim 15 is patentable over Gabber.

Applicant submits that Gabber fails to disclose a method whereby the confirmation record is archived for future use and retrieval. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Gabber and that claim 15 is patentable over Gabber.

Applicant submits that Gabber fails to disclose a method whereby the third party provider notifies the intended recipient that the email message has been sent on behalf of the anonymous client by the third party provider. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Gabber and that claim 15 is patentable over Gabber.

Applicant submits that Gabber fails to disclose a method whereby the third party provider clearly identifies itself as the sender of the email message, with a verifiable, constant email address, along with other identifying information. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Gabber and that claim 15 is patentable over Gabber.

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Applicant submits that Gabber fails to disclose a method whereby the intended recipient may choose to post a reply email message for the anonymous client, using the third party provider as an intermediary, and whereby the response email message need not satisfy a check sum test. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Gabber and that claim 15 is patentable over Gabber.

Applicant submits that Gabber fails to disclose a method whereby the confirmation record comprises the reply email message posted for the anonymous client from the intended recipient, and whereby said confirmation record is sent to the anonymous client. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Gabber and that claim 15 is patentable over Gabber.

With regard to claim 15, in view of Gabber, Applicant respectfully submits that Examiner withdraw its objection and that Applicant's claim 15, as amended, be allowed per the arguments put forth above.

CLAIM 29 IN VIEW OF SYKES

In reference to claim 29, Examiner cites that:

Sykes discloses a method and system for verifying the identity of an intended recipient of an electronic message, in order to facilitate secure communication

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between clients and recipients via a network (i.e. internet), (abstract and paragraph [0005], lines 1-22). Examiner states that Sykes discloses the third party archiving and verification provider system to comprise⁵⁷:

- A system and method for registering and certifying an electronic message, the system and method further comprising a client, an intended recipient, a website (i.e. third party archiving and verification website, Figures 4-22), a processing unit (i.e. third party archiving and verification server), an email database, a means (i.e. third party archiving and verification server) to register the electronic message, the system and method, (abstract; paragraph [0004], lines 1-13; and paragraph [0038], line to paragraph [0040], line 17), comprising the steps of:

The client accessing the website and establishing a registration account; the processing unit assigning a code (i.e. account ID) to the registration account of the client, (paragraph [0048], line 1 to paragraph [0049], line 16 and Figure 4);

- The processing unit receiving the electronic message, the electronic message being from the client; the processing unit storing information about the electronic message and the registration account in the email database; the processing unit

⁵⁷ Application/Control No. 09/982,145, Final Office Action, page 9, paragraph 2, to page 11, paragraph 2.

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resending the electronic message to the intended recipient as identified by the client in the registration account; the processing unit tracking the date the electronic message was sent by the processing unit; the processing unit tracking the date the electronic message was received by the intended recipient; the processing unit creating a confirmation record (i.e. message table entry) that comprises the date the electronic message was sent and the date the electronic message was received by the intended recipient; the processing unit sending the client a copy of the confirmation record (Figure 26); and the processing unit storing information about the confirmation record and the registration account in the email database, (paragraph [0038], line 1 to [0047], line 12; paragraph [0059], line 1 to paragraph [0061], line S; and paragraph [0065], lines 9-13); and

- The processing unit notifying the intended recipient that the processing unit is holding the electronic message pending verification of the identity of the intended recipient; obtaining verification information of the identity of the intended recipient, (paragraph [0005], lines 1-22; and paragraph [0063], lines 1-30).

Applicant respectfully traverses. With respect to identity confirmation as disclosed by Sykes, (as cited by the Examiner above (paragraph [0005], lines 1-22; and paragraph [0063], lines 1-30)) Sykes specifically discloses:

- According to a second aspect of the invention relating to secure electronic communication, the invention **comprises transmitting to a third party via a secure internet connection a message and the email address of at least one intended recipient of the message, who will send an email message to the intended recipient indicating that a message is waiting for the intended recipient via a secure internet connection, transmit the message to the intended recipient who establishes a secure internet connection with the third party, and sends an email to the sender when the message has been transmitted to an intended recipient**. Similarly, the invention relates to providing secure electronic communication between a sender and at least one recipient, comprising receiving from the sender view a secure internet connection a message and the email address of at least one intended recipient of the message; sending an email message to the at least one intended recipient of the message that a message is waiting; transmitting the message to the at least one intended recipient via a secure internet connection established by the at least one intended recipient; and sending an email

message to the sender that the at least one recipient has been sent the message.⁵⁸

- **Where the recipient does not have an account with the Third Party Archiving and Verification Provider, the system and method can include a verification system to make sure that the message is delivered to the proper recipient. As described above, when the sender clicks the "Confirm" button on the FIG. 21 page, the system checks to see if the addressee in the "To:" has an account with the Third Party Archiving and Verification Provider. If the recipient does not have an account, the system sends an email that instructs the user to go to Third Party Archiving and Verification Provider's website and create an account. **After the recipient creates an account, with the Third Party Archiving and Verification Provider's website, the system generates a 64 character string that relates to that user's email address**. The system then sends an email to that address with the 64 character ID embedded in a link. When recipient clicks on that link, the system verifies that the recipient's email address is valid because they referenced an ID that was**

⁵⁸ Sykes specification, US publication number 2002/0129108, paragraph 5, line 11 to line 22.

sent to that email address. The same ID is mapped to the same address in the Third Party Archiving and Verification Provider's database. **After the user clicks the link, the Third Party Archiving and Verification Provider's system marks the recipient's account as active,** then searches the database for any email messages that do not yet have an ID assigned to it, and which also have the recipient's email address in the "To:" line. After the system finds the email messages meeting these criteria, the messages are then assigned to that userID. Thus when the recipient logs in for the first time, the message or messages addressed to the recipient will be waiting for the recipient.⁵⁹

Applicant submits that Sykes, as amended, fails to disclose the following method as disclosed in Applicant's specification. As referenced above, **the method of Sykes' discloses a method of identifying an email address,** not the intended recipient, per the method disclosed in the instant application. Essentially, "verification" according to the method entails registering with the inventive device to receive email that is being held for the recipient. Once verifying that an email address is registered with the Third Party Archiving and Verification Provider's system, the

⁵⁹ Sykes specification, US publication number 2002/0129108, paragraph 63 line 11 to line 30.

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system marks the recipient's account as "active", thereby "verifying" the recipient.

Applicant submits that verifying that an email address was registered with the third party provider does not constitute verifying the identity of the of the intended recipient, as disclosed by the method of the instant application. Applicant's specification and claims, as amended, further specify that the step of verifying an intended recipient's email address is not achieved by the intended recipient simply registering with the third party provider and providing an email address, per the method disclosed in Sykes. Rather, the intended recipient must provide some form of identification to verify the individual as opposed to the email address (FIG 3)⁶⁰.

Specifically, the method of the instant application discloses:

- A request for identity verification prior to the receipt of registered or certified mail entails the Processing Unit contacting the intended recipient prior to sending the electronic message, and any attachments thereto. The Processing Unit verifies that **the email account to which the electronic message is to be routed corresponds to the identity of an intended recipient**, prior to sending the electronic message. Alternatively, the Processing Unit

⁶⁰ Nassiri specification, US Publication Number 2002/0046250, paragraph

may hold an electronic message on behalf of the sender, **whereby the intended recipient is verified in person at a service center maintained by the present invention.** Upon verification of the recipient's identity, the Processing Unit notifies the Client of when the electronic message was delivered to the intended recipient.

Notification typically comprises a digital certificate that is emailed to the Client. If requested, the processing Unit retains a copy of the message contents, including any attachments, for future reference. In any event, the Processing Unit retains a record of the time and date the message was sent and when it was delivered for future reference.⁶¹

and

- With reference to FIG. 3, **the Client may request to have the identity of the intended recipient confirmed** prior to the recipient receiving the electronic mail. Per the method depicted in FIG. 1, the Client must register with the Processing Unit to use the service of its choice on the website. The Processing Unit assigns an identification number or code and a password that corresponds to the registration account for future use by the Client and for the tracking of service requests. Upon registration, the Client may

⁶¹ Nassiri specification, US Publication Number 2002/0046250, paragraph 29, line 1 to 20.

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- submit an identity verification request, along with a registered or certified email request, should the Client require both services.
- The Client selects the appropriate service by way of a pull down menu on the website with the available options: registered mail, certified mail, return receipt mail, delivery confirmation, submission confirmation, and the like, along with a request for Identity Verification. **Identity shall be established by criteria selected by the sender using a pull down menu on the website. The recipient's identity may be verified by:**
 - (i) having the intended recipient using a predetermined electronic code provided by the Client; or
 - (ii) having the intended recipient using a predetermined electronic code provided by the Processing Unit;
 - (iii) having the intended recipient go to a Processing Unit service center for an in-person verification using the intended recipient's personal identification, including, but not limited to, personal paperwork such as a birth certificate, a passport, a driver's license and the like; or
 - (iv) having the intended recipient provide bio-metric verification; or
 - (v) other means whereby the intended recipient utilizes a predetermined code, a password or other means of

encryption.⁶²

CONCLUSION CLAIM 29 IN VIEW OF SYKES

Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose a method whereby the third party provider notifies the intended recipient that the third party provider is holding an email message pending verification of the identity of the intended recipient. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Sykes and that claim 29 is patentable over Sykes.

Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose a method of identity verification using a predetermined electronic code, password, or code (created by either the client or the processing unit) that is provided to the third party provider. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Sykes and that claim 29 is patentable over Sykes.

Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose a method of using biometric data input as a means to verify the intended recipient. Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose a method of using biometric data input, provided in-person to the third party provider, as a means to verify the intended recipient. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Sykes and that claim 29 is patentable over Sykes.

⁶² Nassiri specification, US Publication Number 2002/0046250, paragraph 51, line 11, to paragraph 63, line 3.

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Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose a method whereby the verification biometric information includes at least one of the group of a thumbprint, a voiceprint, a retinal scan or a graphical, hand-written signature, or a personal identity paper, or a drivers license or a passport. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Sykes and that claim 29 is patentable over Sykes.

Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose a method of using personal identity papers as a means to verify the intended recipient. Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose a method of using personal identification papers, provided in-person to the third party provider, as a means to verify the intended recipient. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Sykes and that claim 29 is patentable over Sykes.

Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose a method whereby the third party provider notifies the intended recipient what the verification information comprises, and the means and method for the intended recipient to submit the verification information. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Sykes and that claim 29 is patentable over Sykes.

Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose a method whereby the third party provider obtains the verification information of said intended recipient, and upon receipt, the third party provider resends the email message to the intended recipient, as identified by the client. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Sykes and that claim 29 is patentable over Sykes.

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Applicant submits that Sykes fails to disclose a method whereby the third party provider's website further comprises a means for the client to select the identity verification services, and to submit the email message in conjunction with the verification services. As such, Applicant submits that its method is not anticipated by Sykes and that claim 29 is patentable over Sykes.

With regard to claim 29, Applicant respectfully submits that Examiner withdraw its objection and that Applicant's claim 29, as amended, be allowed per the arguments put forth above.

DEPENDENT CLAIM OBJECTIONS

Applicant respectfully submits that the foregoing arguments with respect to independent claims 1, 15 and 29 establish sufficient basis for the objections to be withdrawn and that claims 1, 15, and 29 be allowed.

In reference to claims 2-13, these claims depend from independent claim 1, which Applicant believes to be allowable in view of the arguments above. As such, applicant submits that claims 2-13 are allowable by virtue of their dependence from claim 1.

In reference to claims 16-28, and 46-49, these claims depend from independent claim 15, which Applicant believes to be allowable in view of the arguments

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above. As such, applicant submits that claims 16-28, and 46-49 are allowable by virtue of their dependence from claim 15.

In reference to claims 30-44, these claims depend from independent claim 29, which Applicant believes to be allowable in view of the arguments above. As such, applicant submits that claims 30-44, and 45 are allowable by virtue of their dependence from claim 29.

CONCLUSION

Applicant submits that the stated grounds of rejection in the pending claims have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at 310-739-9996 or 310-665-0111.

Respectfully Submitted,

M. Lauren

Nick Nassiri